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Defense of CIA

WE BELIEVE President Kennedy performed an important service to the nation when he came out in strong support of the Central Intelligence Agency. As the CIA's former chief, Allen Dulles, had said earlier the same day in an exclusive interview with the Journal-American, the CIA was being made "the goat" in the Viet Nam snafu.

The President declared it was "wholly untrue" that the CIA had been making its own policy in Viet Nam and had not cooperated fully with other agencies of the U. S. Government. He stressed that the CIA has worked under direct instructions from the White House and has done "a good job."

Intelligence work is necessarily hush-hush and Americans always feel uncomfortable about secret operations. But this nation needs its Intelligence officers vitally in a world where all nations engage in secret surveillance, and it would be a highly dangerous situation for the CIA to be deprived of the nation's confidence.

There has apparently been a lack up to now of clear-cut policy for Viet Nam, and it is commendable that steps are being taken to remedy that uncertainty. It is also heartening that President Kennedy has stepped in to prevent making the CIA "the goat."